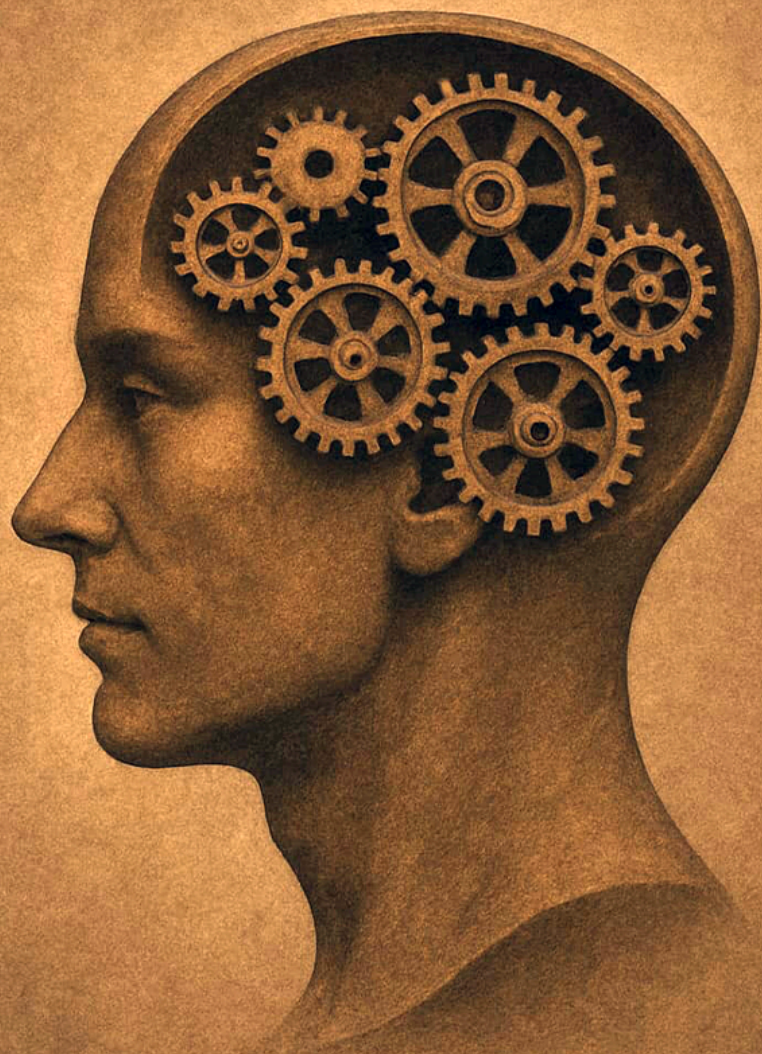


# CONDITIONALITY



Miki Yanto

# CONDITIONALITY

## **Without Self – Anatta The Path Without Burden – Full of Peace**

I realize that this book, too, was born due to conditions.  
I express my gratitude to all the conditions that have supported it.

Jakarta, April 15, 2025  
Miki Yanto

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# WITHOUT SELF

At some point in life, we may ask:

**"Who am I, really?"**

Or,

**"What is the meaning of all this?"**

---

That question does not always arise  
in the same words.  
Sometimes it is merely felt  
as a **subtle restlessness—**  
a **sensitivity that has yet to be named.**

---

It feels like there's an awareness  
that life is happening,  
but without really knowing  
**why we exist,**  
or **who is actually experiencing it all.**

---

This is not merely a question of identity,  
but of **existence,**  
of **presence,**  
of this world  
and **our role within it.**

---

And when that question truly arises,  
we begin to realize:  
it's not **answers from others** that we seek—  
because they **never truly bring us peace.**

---

Often,  
the answer **demands that we believe.**  
We may not feel satisfied,  
yet we are **powerless to resist.**

---

Life goes on,  
and the question slowly settles—  
not because an answer has been found,  
but because **we no longer know where else to search.**

---

Yet deep inside,  
**the curiosity has not died.**  
It is merely waiting for the right moment  
to emerge—  
not as a **desire to know,**  
but as **an urge to see.**  
To **truly know, firsthand.**

---

And here, the search shifts direction.  
No longer seeking answers **outside,**  
but the desire to know from **within.**

---

**Knowledge born from direct seeing—**  
not merely to satisfy curiosity,  
but to touch **the core of this existence.**  
And to make us  
**truly know**  
what has long been assumed as **“I”.**

---

**What is it that we truly call "I" ?**

Not merely a name,  
not a role,  
not the body,  
nor the mind.

Not even memory or will.

This question is no longer theoretical,  
but arises from a deep urge to understand directly,  
through quiet yet clear observation.

Like realizing that life is unfolding,  
yet not knowing who is truly living it.

---

From there, a subtle restlessness arises:  
If I am not all of these,  
then what is it that has been feeling,  
wanting,  
rejoicing,  
and hurting all this time?"

---

**Here, the search turns into an unveiling.**

No longer seeking something hidden,  
but seeing directly that  
what we thought of as "I"  
has always depended on conditions.

The body depends on food.  
The mind depends on perception and memory.  
Feelings arise from contact and interpretation.  
And even will arises from prior impulses.  
Everything arises due to causes.

Nothing stands alone.

So how could there be a single, eternal "I"  
that governs it all?

---

"In the clear light of observation,  
the "I" is nothing more than a flicker in the stream of events.

Like a flame seen burning on a piece of wood—  
it belongs neither to the wood,  
nor to the air,  
nor to anyone.

It is merely a meeting of conditions.  
And when those conditions cease, the flame vanishes.  
Not because it goes somewhere else,  
but because it never stood on its own.

---

In the same way, when all that upholds the illusion of "I" collapses,  
what remains is not emptiness,  
but silence.

A freedom that belongs to no one,  
because there is no one who needs to possess it.

---

We often feel that there is something called **"I"**,  
but truly... **where is this "I"?**

---

### **Is the "I" found in the body?**

This body is always changing:  
from small to grown, aging, then dying.

If this body is "I" ,  
when a single hair falls out or a single cell dies,  
does a part of "I" disappear as well?

Does someone become a different person  
just because their skin renews every few years?

---

### **Perhaps the "I" is the mind?**

But the mind is a stream that never stands still.  
The thoughts of this morning have vanished before noon arrived.  
And the thoughts of this evening may not be the same as those now.

If "I" were the mind,  
why could a person change simply because of new information,  
or because of emotions that come and go?

---

### **Or perhaps the "self" exists within consciousness?**

Yet consciousness itself does not stand alone.  
Visual consciousness arises because there are eyes and forms.  
Auditory consciousness arises because there are ears and sounds.

Then...  
if someone faints, does their "self" also vanish?  
When one sleeps without dreaming, where does consciousness go?

---

If the body is not "self"...  
if thoughts are not "self"...  
and even consciousness is not "self"...  
**then where is the "self"?**



## The “Self” Is Just a Name

When one looks deeper,  
one begins to understand:

*The “self” is merely a name—*

a name for a chain of interdependent events.

---

## Like a House

We call it a “**house**.”

But does a house truly exist as a single, independent entity?

- If the walls are removed, can it still be called a house?
  - If the roof is taken off, can it still be called a house?
  - If the house is dismantled, where does the house go?
- 

**“House” is merely a concept—**

a collection of stones, wood, and tiles  
arranged in a certain pattern.

Without that pattern,  
there is nothing that can be called a **house**.

---

**Similarly, this “self”**

is merely a fusion of bodily and mental processes  
arising and passing away moment by moment.

When taken apart, piece by piece,  
no true “**self**” can be found.

---

Thus... just like a house,  
the “self” is nothing more than a name—  
a label affixed to a bundle of conditioned phenomena.

## **The Grasping That Causes Suffering**

Yet many still search for something at the center.  
They yearn for an essence, a solid core,  
something unchanging,  
something they can call “self.”

But like trying to grasp the wind with one's fingers,  
the tighter the grip,  
the greater the suffering,  
and all in vain.

---

The more one clings to this bundle as “me,”  
the more one is tossed about by conditions:

- Happy when circumstances meet expectations,
- suffering when they do not.

Yet the world does not move according to one's wishes,  
and happiness based on conditions... is too fragile, too conditional.

---

## **When the Grasping Is Released**

The one who sees this stops clinging to the bundle.

- They no longer claim the body as “self,”
- nor the mind as “self,”
- nor consciousness as “self.”

They see:

*All these are merely processes, moving according to their conditions, ownerless.*

---

Then a question arises:

**“If there is no self, who is experiencing all of this?”**

This question is like asking:

“If there is no house, then what is this place called?”

House is just a name, a fusion, a coming together.

It arises due to causes, endures because of causes, and disappears because of causes.

So too with life itself:  
a blend given a name.  
There is no “self” possessing it—  
only a process unfolding, supported by conditions.

---

### **Like a Falling Leaf**

When one no longer clings to anything as “self,”  
they are like a leaf falling from a tree.

The leaf does not suffer.  
It does not ask where it will go.  
It endures because of conditions. It falls because of conditions.

---

Likewise,  
one who sees clearly the blending of phenomena  
no longer seeks something to grasp.  
Nothing needs to be added.  
Nothing needs to be taken away.  
For from the very beginning...  
**there was never truly anything possessed.**

---

When there is nothing to hold onto,  
there is no suffering.  
When there is nothing owned,  
there is nothing that can be lost.

When there is no “self,”  
where could suffering possibly arise?

### **True Freedom**

The one who understands this no longer embellishes anything as  
“self.”

Freedom is not about improving the conditions of the self.  
It is about accepting the conditions as they are.

They are like someone who realizes that themselves,  
and all other beings,  
no matter the condition,  
are just the same.  
Because this fusion of phenomena belongs to no one.

---

## WHERE IS THE 'SELF'?

Think about a moment when you felt truly happy.

Perhaps when the gentle evening breeze touched your skin,  
or when someone spoke words that moved your heart.

The heart feels open, light, warmly connected to the world.

Now think about a time when you felt sad.

The sky seems gray, the body feels heavy, the world appears distant.  
Everything feels different.

---

But...

is the one who felt happiness the same as the one who felt sadness?

If you look deeper: no.

One is full of smiles, the other full of tears.

One is open, the other is closed.

---

So, where is the 'self'?

Is there anything constant between the two?

If there is nothing constant,

how could there be a 'self' that owns all of this?

---

Maybe you will answer, *"It's still me who feels it."*

But who is that "me"?

Are you now the same person you were ten years ago?

Hasn't your body changed?

Hasn't your voice changed?

Haven't your thoughts changed?

If everything has changed...

is it possible that something unchanging exists, claiming to be the  
center of it all?

Reflect on this, not as a riddle to solve,  
but as a doorway to realizing this fusion—this body and mind.  
Because only with mindfulness can we begin to see  
that what we call “self” is not the center,  
but merely a part of the flow itself.

---

One moment, suddenly the heart feels wide, light,  
the world feels friendly.  
Then, another moment, sadness strikes,  
suddenly the world feels dark, narrow, everything seems wrong.

---

But...  
aren't the one who feels happy and the one who feels sad different?  
Don't the feelings come and go, just like the weather?

---

The question is:  
If the “self” who is happy and the “self” who is sad are different,  
then where is the real “self”?

---

Consciousness is not like a flashlight held by someone.  
It is like a river—its waters ever-moving, impossible to grasp.

One moment thinking about the future,  
another moment recalling the past, then drawn to a sound,  
then worrying about the body.

One thought replaces another, endlessly.  
There is no single point that can be called a "permanent control  
center."

And when you try to find it...  
...all you see is a flow, a fusion.

## **Seeing Without an Owner**

Notice this moment—

there is awareness of these words,  
of the reading happening right now.

But... who is aware?

Where is the “self” that reads?

---

In the beginning, we could not read.

Through a long process—learning, practicing, becoming familiar—  
we began to recognize letters, words, and then meaning.

Yet if someone comes from a different language,  
they would not understand.

If these eyes could not see,

or if there were no light,

there would be no awareness of these words.

---

So many conditions must be present

for this experience of reading to happen.

None of it arises by a single act of will.

---

## **Look deeper:**

this awareness never stands alone.

It always arises with something—

always aware of something.

Visual consciousness arises because there are forms and light.

Auditory consciousness arises because there are sounds.

Thinking consciousness arises because there are mental objects—  
such as recalling something,

grasping meaning,

planning what to do,

or imagining things that have not yet happened.

From these streams,  
often feelings arise:  
pleasure,  
fear,  
anger,  
and countless other emotions.  
All these are objects of the mind.  
And without objects,  
thinking consciousness cannot arise.

---

There is never pure consciousness  
standing alone without an object,  
without conditions.  
When there are no forms,  
no sounds,  
no thoughts—  
that consciousness fades.  
It cannot be separated  
from the objects it knows.

---

Like a reflection  
that cannot exist without a mirror and light,  
so too is consciousness:  
not something permanent,  
not a center observing from outside,  
but a part of the chain of causes and conditions,  
mutually supporting each other.

---

And because of that,  
consciousness does not belong to anyone.  
It simply occurs—  
when the conditions are complete.



Pause for a moment.

Reflect on this:

Whatever arises,  
requires many supporting factors and conditions,  
not merely personal desire,  
not simply because "I want it."

---

If we observe with neutrality,  
every experience will reveal itself  
as something conditioned,  
a fusion without a core.

---

An understanding arises.  
A bodily sensation arises.  
An emotion arises.

*"I do not own them,  
I do not summon them by my will.  
I cannot order them to leave either.  
They simply occur when conditions support them."*

---

When the eyes can no longer see,  
even if one desires to see,  
it cannot happen.

## From Owning to Witnessing

The more you see everything as conditions,  
not as possessions,  
the lighter life feels.

---

*"It's not that I am angry,  
only that anger has arisen."  
"It's not that I am afraid,  
only that fear has been conditioned."  
"It's not that I am calm,  
only that calmness has appeared due to causes."*

---

You are merely witnessing.  
And slowly,  
the heavy sense of "I" begins to dissolve.

---

## What Remains Without 'Self'?

When nothing is seasoned with "I,"  
there is nothing left to defend...

When there is no longer a center  
that needs to be right,  
needs to win,  
needs to be recognized...

---

What remains is simply:  
Silence.  
Peace.  
Weightlessness.

A vast space where everything is allowed to arise and fade away.

No burden.

No ownership.

No 'self.'

---

And there,

true freedom begins to be felt.

## A MACHINE WITHOUT A DRIVER

Imagine a machine,  
with many interconnected gears.  
When one gear turns, others move along.  
When one gear jams, the entire system stops.

---

Our mind works in a similar way.  
No single gear moves on its own.  
Every feeling, thought, and reaction arises because other gears set it  
in motion.

Hunger arises because the body has not received food.  
Love arises through familiarity, memories, or comfort.  
Fear arises from the image of threat.  
Desire arises because of previous pleasures.

Every mental state appears because of causes.  
All are born from conditions.  
And when those causes vanish, so do their effects.

---

Anger arises when expectations are unmet.  
Did you create that anger?  
Or did it simply arise when the conditions were right?

If you didn't choose it,  
if you didn't control it,  
how could it truly be called "yours"?

---

Now, notice:

When you are angry,  
do you consciously choose to be angry?  
Do you deliberately invite that anger?

Or...

does it arise by itself, suddenly,  
like a fire igniting because there was fuel and a spark?

If you did not choose it,  
if you did not create it...  
then why claim, “This is my anger”?  
Why assume it belongs to you?

---

Every feeling and thought is an event.  
It happens because certain conditions gather together.  
If just one condition is removed,  
the event ceases.

Like a lamp that goes out when the electricity cuts off—  
not because “I turned it off,”  
but because the cause disappeared.

---

Look deeper:

You do not create your thoughts.  
You do not order joy or disappointment.  
Even when you “try to think positively,”  
the thoughts that arise still come because of conditions.

---

Where is the “driver”?  
And if there is no driver,  
then who can be said to own all of this?

---

Understanding conditionality frees us from the burden of needing to  
control everything.  
Because if all of this is merely a stream of cause and effect...  
all that is needed is to observe,  
not to control.

---

## THE STREAM OF CENTERLESS AWARENESS

Awareness is often thought of as a center that observes everything.  
As if there were a "me" sitting behind a screen,  
holding a flashlight, choosing what to look at.

But is that really the case?  
Look directly:

One moment you're thinking about the future.  
Then suddenly, a memory of the past arises.  
Suddenly you're distracted by a sound.  
Then a discomfort appears in your body.  
Then you return to thoughts about someone who hurt you.  
Then you smile as you remember something funny.

---

Did you orchestrate all of that?  
Did you command those thoughts to arise one after another?

Or...  
did they all come and go by themselves—  
like the wind blowing without a certain direction?

Awareness is not a single beam of light  
being directed by a hidden controller.

It is more like a river:  
flowing without a center,  
changing without end,  
and never something you can hold onto.

Every moment, the stream changes.  
What you are thinking now  
is not what you were thinking ten minutes ago.  
Even your feelings toward someone  
can change just because of a single word  
or a shift in atmosphere.

---

So, if awareness changes...  
thoughts change...  
feelings change...

Where is the center? Where is the core self?

If you try to search for it...  
search for a single, fixed point you can call "the aware me"...  
you will only find silence.  
Emptiness.

---

No solid self behind the screen.  
There is only conditioned awareness,  
supported by causes,  
flowing, forming, without an owner.

And here lies the wonder:  
The moment you see this stream as it truly is, you begin to see it  
clearly. And when the stream is seen,  
the burden of having to be the "controller" starts to fall away.

The heavy weight of "me" begins to lessen.  
There is no need for a controller.  
The stream flows as it should.  
And we don't need to be anyone within it.



# EVERYTHING ARISES BECAUSE OF CONDITIONS

Nothing arises on its own.

Nothing stands without being supported by something else.

Thoughts arise because of conditions.

Feelings arise because of conditions.

Even what we feel as “I”...

is merely a chain of mutually supporting conditions.

If the causes vanish,

they too will cease.

---

Look inward:

"I am angry."

"I am afraid."

"I am thinking."

Is it really yours?

Or did it simply arise because there was a trigger?

---

Like embers that flare up because of the wind, so too this mind:  
heated, calmed, chaotic, or joyful—  
none of it appears by itself.

It arises because it is supported by conditions.

And just like fire...

if not fed with fuel, it will extinguish itself.

---

Knowing this, there is no need to blame.

No need to cling.

No need to force everything to change.

Simply observe:

"This is the cause. This is the effect."

If you seek peace,  
abandon the causes that nourish restlessness.  
That's all.

---

Nothing stands alone.  
Even the most personal feeling or thought  
is simply a reaction from interconnected conditions.

We cannot be angry without a trigger.  
We cannot be sad without a cause.  
We cannot be happy if the supporting conditions are absent.

Everything that happens,  
always arises because the right conditions have come together.

---

### **“I” Also Arises Because of Causes**

What we call “I”  
is not a complete figure controlling everything.

It is merely a name  
for a collection of conditions gathering and moving together:  
form, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness.

---

When we say, "I am thinking,"  
in truth, certain causes are simply bringing forth thoughts.

When we say, "I am sad,"  
what is really happening  
is the meeting of mental and physical conditions  
that manifest as sorrow.

---

### **Then What?**

What if we stopped feeding the causes?

What if we stopped reacting to thoughts?

Stopped watering the seeds of attachment with excessive attention?

Neither chasing...

nor rejecting...

but simply recognizing

that all of this arises because of conditions,

and will cease when the conditions are no longer present?

---

This is the beginning of freedom.

When we truly see

that everything arises because of causes,

we will also see...

There is nothing worth clinging to.

Nothing that can be possessed.

Nothing that needs to be defended.

---

Suffering, too, arises because of conditions.

And when we understand the causes,

we can stop planting them.

Not planting means not harvesting.

---

### **The Truth That Liberates**

This is a simple,

yet profoundly liberating Truth:

Everything arises because of causes.

And when the causes cease, so too does the effect.

## CONTEMPLATION OF CONDITIONALITY

Nothing arises without a cause.  
Even a fleeting thought—has its conditions.

When we feel anger, sadness, joy, longing, or fear...  
none of it happens because an “I” chose it.  
It happens because of preceding causes.

Sometimes the causes are clear.  
Sometimes they are hidden.  
But they are always there,  
quietly working behind the curtain of awareness.

---

If this body hungers,  
it is because the cells need energy.

If the heart is restless,  
perhaps it is because of unfulfilled hopes.

If the mind rejects reality,  
perhaps it has been shaped by an environment accustomed to  
avoiding pain.

Whatever it is,  
nothing stands alone.  
Everything arises due to conditions.

---

When we begin to realize that “I” itself  
is merely a formation of countless conditions:  
Environment,  
Teachings,  
Experiences,  
Even food,  
...then we can begin to let go of attachment to identity.

There is no need to hate ourselves for emotions.  
Because emotions are not truly ours.  
They simply arise because of conditions.  
And they will disappear when those conditions change.

---

## **Conditionality Teaches Humility**

It reminds us...  
that we are not the center of the universe.  
Not the rulers of the mind.

We are simply part of  
the vast stream of causes and effects,  
interwoven and bringing forth this world  
just as it is.

---

Whenever the mind stirs,  
gently notice:  
"This is the way conditions are."

And when the mind is calm,  
do not cling quickly.  
Also realize:  
"This condition, too, is impermanent and not mine."

---

Then slowly...  
a light arises in the heart:  
That there is no ownership.  
No self.  
Nothing that needs to be controlled.

There is only a process unfolding...  
and the peace that comes from accepting it.

---

In realizing this conditionality—  
we find freedom.  
Because if everything arises due to causes,

then suffering, too, can end...  
if its causes cease.

---

### **This is How the Dhamma Works**

Not through miracles,  
nor through empty hopes,  
but through clear understanding  
of how suffering arises.

Anything that depends on causes  
will cease when those causes are extinguished.

And this process  
can only be seen through mindfulness..

When everything is seen as it truly is,  
the chain of cause and effect of suffering  
begins to be directly visible.

---

From this direct seeing  
arises true understanding.

And such understanding  
is called wisdom.

With wisdom and direct knowledge,  
one can  
uproot suffering at its very source.

# MINDFULNESS

## Conditionality, Non-Self, and the Flow of Phenomena

To see things as they truly are,  
we do not need to force ourselves to be neutral or pure.  
It's okay if attention is still biased.  
It's okay if we are not yet neutral.  
The only thing needed is this:  
**be aware of whatever arises.**

---

Mindfulness already exists within everyone.  
It does not need to be created.  
But it is covered by old habits:

- clinging to "self,"
- believing that thoughts are the controller,
- attaching to views as absolute truth.

We cling to identity,  
to likes and dislikes,  
to pleasure, hopes, past memories, and future plans.  
Everything we notice is flavored with "I,"  
and mindfulness becomes buried deep.  
It has no space to emerge.  
Yet it is never lost—  
only forgotten.

---

To allow mindfulness to reappear,  
this contemplation may help:  
Thoughts, feelings, the body—  
all are conditioned phenomena,  
not independent entities.

Observation, accompanied by right contemplation,  
can allow us to see directly.

When mindfulness arises,  
it is like awakening from a long dream.

---

## **Mindfulness: Not About Seeking, But About Letting Go**

Mindfulness is not a supernatural vision,  
not a third eye,  
not a mystical experience.  
It is nothing extraordinary.  
It is simply ordinary seeing—  
but without burden.

---

It appears when we stop:

- clinging,
- chasing,
- controlling,
- judging,
- claiming all this as “me

## **Simple Practice**

Sit still.

Observe things as they are:

- Any thought that arises
- Feelings that come and go
- The body, the breath, sounds, lights, movements

There is no need to try to be neutral.  
Just witness things as they are.

When we become an observer who does not interfere,  
life feels much lighter.  
There is nothing left to defend.  
Nothing left to fear.



This mind and body can be however they are.  
Whatever enters the field of awareness—  
is simply noticed without picking and choosing.

What remains is just mind and body  
functioning as they are.

---

## **When Conditionality Becomes Clear**

When conditionality is clearly seen,  
we stop asking:  
**“Why is this happening to me?”**  
Because now we see clearly:  
There was never an “I” to whom things happened.

---

If something happens, it is because of the supporting causes.  
If suffering arises, it is because there are causes for it.

---

## **The End of Suffering**

Seeing this is not passivity,  
nor blind resignation.  
Rather, this is where the end of suffering begins to appear.

---

Freedom from the illusion of control,  
freedom from the burden of identity,  
freedom from the need to defend  
something that was never ours to begin with.

---

And when there is nothing left to defend,  
the heavy burden we have carried  
becomes lighter and lighter—  
as clear seeing arises  
through mindfulness.

## **PRACTICE: SEEING WITHOUT “I”**

### **Sit in Stillness**

Find a quiet place.

Sit comfortably.

Close your eyes.

Breathe in slowly...

breathe out slowly...

Just feel the breath.

Don't change it.

Don't control it.

Simply witness it.

---

Ask softly in your mind:

**"Who is breathing?"**

**"Is this breath truly ‘me’... or merely a phenomenon arising because the conditions support it?"**

Let this question echo gently within,

not to be answered,

but to be directly contemplated.

---

### **Observing Thoughts**

As you sit, you'll notice your thoughts:

- "What am I doing?"
- "Am I doing this right?"
- "Why is this so difficult?"
- "I don't like this."

No need to fight them.  
No need to judge.  
Simply observe whatever arises.

---

Remember:  
**What you are observing is not the observer.**  
It is just thought.  
Not "I."

---

Be careful with the thought that pretends to be the controller.  
If it arises, simply notice:  
**"Ah, here's a thought trying to control."**

---

Whatever the state of the mind,  
it's just a condition—  
Not "me."  
Not "mine."  
Not "myself."

---

**"This is just thought... arising because of conditions."  
"It comes because of causes... and will pass when its causes  
fade away."**

---

Like leaves drifting down a river,  
thoughts come and go.  
We are not the leaves.  
Not the river.  
We are simply the witness.

---

## **In Conversation and Emotion**

During conversation or emotional moments, quietly ask within:

- "Am I trying to defend myself?"
- "Am I trying to be right?"
- "Am I trying to be seen as something?"

If any of these arise, just notice.

---

See clearly:

- "Who feels threatened?"
- "Is this truly "I" —or simply a stream of reactions from conditioned patterns?"

## **Evening Reflection**

Before sleeping, reflect:

- What arose today?
- What emotions were most dominant?
- Were there moments where you simply observed—without clinging?

## **Consistency Grows Mindfulness**

This practice is not about gaining something, nor about becoming “better.”

It is about seeing reality as it truly is:  
That everything is merely a combination.

---

There has never been an “I”  
that owns,  
controls,  
or stands at the center.

There has never been an “I”  
that truly suffers  
or carries a burden.

---

There is only the stream.  
And this truth can be seen...  
only through mindfulness:

Attention that is neutral,  
unbiased,  
and simply sees.

## ONLY A PROCESS UNFOLDING

We are used to thinking:

"I" am the one living this life.

"I" am the one thinking, feeling, acting,  
and experiencing suffering or happiness.

But if we observe neutrally,

there is nothing that can truly be called "I."

The concept of "I" is merely a habit of the mind—  
not something real.

When seen clearly, all that exists is a process:  
without center, without owner, without a fixed core.

If there is truly an "I," where is it?

This kind of inquiry is very helpful.  
Let us explore it more deeply.

Try to find this "I."

If it truly exists, it should be findable.

But where? Is "I" in the body?

If so, in which part? Bone? Flesh? Blood? Cells?

Is "I" in the mind?

If so, in which thought?

Thoughts are conditioned—  
they arise from past impressions.

When we think,  
*"I am human," "I am a man," "I am a woman,"*  
these are just thoughts,  
arising from causes  
that were not there before.

---

What we feel and perceive—  
*"I am in my head, in my heart, in my chest"—*  
is simply bodily awareness.

*"I see with my eyes."*  
But seeing is conditioned.

There must be: Eyes, An object, Contact between the eye and the  
object, Light— then seeing happens.

Without all these conditions,  
there is no seeing.

Yet the mind claims:  
*"I am the one who sees."*

Without all those causes,  
no matter how much we want it,  
we could not see.

---

The same is true for hearing,  
for walking,  
for every sensory experience.

We think:  
*"I can walk whenever I want."*  
*"I walk because I decide to."*

But wanting is just one of many conditions  
for walking to happen.

When the legs are weak or disabled,  
even if we wish with all our might,  
we cannot walk.

---

There are countless factors  
behind every event.

Nothing stands alone.

Only the mind—when not neutral—  
claims: *"This is me."*

The mind itself is ever-changing, unstable, uncontrollable.

It moves according to conditions  
and patterns already formed.

When a pattern of anger arises,  
we are swept away by anger, unable to resist.

*"I don't want to be angry."*  
*"I don't want to be afraid."*

If the mind were truly ours and unconditioned,  
we would be able to control it.

---

Only through mindfulness, through neutral observation,  
can the mind be freed from the view of "I"  
and see that all phenomena  
are simply conditioned combinations.



# VARIOUS SIMILES

## Waves in the Ocean

Imagine the waves in the ocean.  
They seem like something real.

But if we look carefully:

- Waves are not separate from the ocean.
- There is no fixed point we can call "a wave."
- It is simply the movement of water—  
not an independent entity, not a permanent thing.

If the wind stops, the waves disappear.

In the same way, the "self" is like a wave.  
What we call "I" is just a flow of experiences,  
thoughts, and feelings  
arising and fading with their conditions.

---

There is no permanent "I."  
Only combinations exist.  
Nothing stands alone.  
Only patterns of change  
sustained by causes.

- There is no fixed thing called "I."
- We are only used to thinking there is.
- Everything comes and goes like the waves.
- Feelings rise and fall  
like waves on the sea, beyond our control.

If we stop thinking in the concept of "I,"  
we begin to see  
that life is merely conditioned phenomena  
without a core self.

Like waves are not separate from the ocean,  
we are not separate from the flow of conditions.

Only cause and effect  
work by themselves.

---

## **Bread**

We call it "bread"  
and treat it as something real.

But if we look closely:

- Bread is made of flour, water, yeast, and salt.
- Without flour, there is no bread.
- Without ingredients, there is no bread.

"Bread" is just a name we give.  
In truth, there is no bread,  
only a combination of elements  
coming together.

If we search for the true essence of bread,  
we cannot find it.

Where was the bread before it was made?  
Where does it go after it breaks apart?

---

Bread never truly comes or goes.  
It is just a conditioned appearance,  
changing along with its causes.

Likewise, we are:

- Only a combination of body, mind formations, feelings, consciousness, and memory.
- No fixed essence,  
only conditioned patterns  
in constant flux.

Like bread,  
we are formed by specific causes—  
not independent entities.

---

## **Fire**

Everything happening right now  
does not arise from the will of one entity,  
but from a network of causes and conditions.

Imagine a fire spreading in a forest.

The fire is not a single entity,  
but the result of many conditions:

- Dry leaves
- Wind
- Heat
- Oxygen

Fire is not "one thing"  
that stands alone.  
It is a process,  
always changing depending on fuel.

If the wind shifts  
or rain falls,  
the fire fades.

---

Our mind is like that too.  
It does not arise from a single source,  
but from:

- Past experiences
- Current environment
- Physical and mental state
- Arising emotions

There is no "I"  
that creates thought absolutely.  
Thought is a reaction—  
a formation based on conditions  
constantly changing.

Because everything arises from causes,  
there is no fixed core  
that can be called "I."

---

## **Burning Wood**

Imagine wood burning in the forest, like a campfire.  
We watch it from afar.

When we see it,  
we remain at ease.

Why?  
Because we do not think,  
*"I am the one burning."*

There is no self in it.  
Thus, whatever happens, without "I,"  
there is no real problem.

---

The same applies to suffering.

We often feel,  
*"I am suffering."*  
But when "I" disappears,  
only suffering remains—  
without a sufferer.

The fire still burns.  
The suffering still occurs.  
But there is no "I" who suffers.

We are trapped in the thought:  
*"I suffer,"*  
*"I am happy,"*  
but in reality,  
there are only processes,  
only causes and conditions at work.

---

Just like fire arises when fuel is present,  
true suffering arises  
when attachment is present—

when we flavor what happens  
with "I" rather than simply seeing  
burning or extinguishing.

Suffering ceases  
when the illusion of "I" dissolves.

---

If we experience suffering,  
recognize that it is not ours.

It arises because of causes:  
perhaps harsh words,  
past traumas,  
physical conditions,  
or broken relationships.

If we wish to end suffering,  
there are two ways:

---

### **The Usual Way**

- Understand the causes of suffering.
- Remove the causes, or
- Let them burn out naturally.

If the fuel disappears,  
the fire goes out.  
Life then becomes smoother,  
perhaps more pleasant.

If we succeed, good. If we don't,  
we can still use the situation  
to deepen our freedom from suffering.

---

## The Deeper Way: Letting Go of "I"

In this path,  
the more important focus is:

- To realize that suffering is not "mine."
- Whether or not we can remove it,  
the goal is to see  
through the illusion of ownership.

This leads to a state  
where happiness is not dependent on conditions.

This is called **the perfection of gratitude**:  
feeling satisfied and grateful  
regardless of circumstances.

---

It is a heart that accepts  
whatever comes.

This deep acceptance  
is possible only  
with the dissolution of the Ego,  
the sense of "I."

Only through mindfulness  
can this be truly achieved.

Reflection and thought alone  
can only guide us part of the way.

## **The Wind**

The wind blows.

We can feel it, but:

- Where is the wind, really?
- It moves and rests because of conditions.
- Can we truly control the wind?

The wind is not something we can grasp.

It is merely a pattern of air movement that arises due to pressure differences.

In the same way, so is the "self."

---

## **The Question of the Self**

This repeated questioning about the self is truly beneficial:

- We can feel the experience of life, but where is the "self"?
- It moves and rests because of conditions.
- Can we truly control our own mind?

The "self" is no more than a formed pattern,  
arising and ceasing due to conditions,  
just like the wind that blows.

---

## **The River**

A river constantly flows.

We can see the river,

but if we search for a part that can be called



the "core" of the river,  
we won't find it.

Each drop of water in the river  
comes from rain,  
springs,  
or smaller streams.  
There is no single point in the river  
that can be said to be the "center" of it.

The river is simply a flow of ever-changing water.  
There is no fixed point that can be called its essence.

- If we scoop a bucket of water, is that the river?
- If we dry part of it, is it still the river?
- If its water keeps changing, where does the river go?

The river is not something permanent.  
It is merely a designation  
for an ever-changing flow of water,  
without a fixed center.

---

## **The Self and the Flow**

In the same way, so are we:

- The mind keeps changing, like flowing water.
- The body keeps changing, with cells dying and new ones replacing them.
- Personality, emotions, and desires keep changing according to conditions.

We are merely a flow of phenomena,  
not something fixed and solid  
that can be called a "self."

---

## **Our Experiences**

- Thoughts arise from previous understanding.
- Emotions arise because of previous conditions.
- Desires arise from past experiences.

They are mere combinations.  
There is no central controller.  
Only a chain reaction endlessly unfolding.

---

## **The Chosen Choice**

We often feel there is a "self" making decisions.

But if we look closer,  
every decision arises due to certain causes,  
not because there is a "self" in control.

For example, when choosing food:

- Are we truly choosing,  
or are our choices influenced by taste, habit,  
past experiences,  
or suggestions from others?
- Can we choose without all of that?

Even random choices arise from some condition.  
We cannot escape the law of cause and effect.

---

## Not About Losing, But Seeing Clearly

Some people may fear  
the idea of no-self,  
as if they would be "losing" something.

Seeing no-self is not about losing.  
It is about no longer being deceived.

We lose nothing—  
because from the beginning,  
there was never a true "self."

When we realize no-self:

- There is no more suffering  
because there is no need to defend what is unreal.
- There is no more fear  
because there is nothing that can truly be lost.
- There is no more attachment  
because there is no "self" to grasp anything.

Life becomes lighter.  
More peaceful.  
More free.

Not because we gain something,  
but because there is no longer an illusion to protect.

---

## **Living by Patterns**

We still move according to patterns,  
being aware of body and mind conditions as they are,  
moving based on the understanding  
and habits we have developed.

The difference is simply this:  
we are happier  
due to a reduction of the Ego.

---

## **Different Responses**

Each person will have different results,  
depending on how much  
they can erode the sense of "self."

Some may reject this theory.  
Some may only reach the level of intellectual understanding.  
Some are touched and amazed  
by the idea of "no-self"—  
like the writer who is currently at this stage.

Some are able to clearly see  
that there is no permanent "self,"  
and thus stop clinging to anything.

---

## **Seeing Clearly**

Realizing that life is merely  
cause and effect unfolding as it is.

Thoughts come and go,  
no longer regarded as personal belongings.

Because of seeing this clearly:

- There is no more suffering.
- There is nothing left to defend.
- There is nothing left to fear.
- There is no longer a "self" worrying about anything.

When nothing is grasped  
as "self,"  
what remains  
is true peace.

This is approximately  
the ultimate goal of this Teaching.

# NO SELF IN THE STREAM OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

We are accustomed to saying,

"I feel,"

"I choose,"

"I walk this path."

But is that truly so?

Look carefully:

- Feelings arise because of contact.
- Contact happens due to the eye and form, ear and sound, mind and ideas.
- The mind moves not because there is a controller, but because there are conditions leading it:
  - a sound triggers a memory,
  - memory triggers an emotion,
  - emotion triggers a desire, and so on.

All of these form a chain of conditions.

Even what we call "free will,"

if examined closely,

always arises after impulses, intentions,

likes or dislikes—

all of which arise because of causes.

Thus, "I choose"

is merely a narrative formed after the event,

not a controller of the event.

## **All Experiences Belong to No One**

Pain, belongs to no one.  
Joy, is not owned by any "self."  
Sadness, hope, curiosity, even love—  
all arise due to supporting conditions.

And therefore...  
There is nothing worth clinging to.  
There is nothing that truly deserves to be called: "This is mine."

At this moment, we are sitting and reading.  
But even the awareness that  
"I am reading"  
arises because:

- the shape of letters,
- the presence of light,
- visual contact,
- past experience with language,
- and the mental drive  
that stirs interest in reading.

None of these  
can be claimed  
as personal possessions.

---

## **Then, What Does This Mean?**

It means, suffering arises  
when we assume there is a "self"  
in the midst of this flow.

When we think:

"I am the one who suffers,"  
whereas in reality,  
there is only *dukkha*  
arising due to causes,  
and ceasing when those causes disappear.

This understanding is not about escaping life,  
but about freeing ourselves from the illusion of self,  
and seeing the truth as it truly is.

To no longer cling to anything—  
which, in truth,  
was never "me,"  
never "mine,"  
and never "myself."

The wrong view of self-identity  
disappears through mindfulness.



## CONDITIONED TIME

What is the past?

Merely a memory arising in the present.

What is the future?

Merely an imagination also arising in the present.

And even the "present moment," if looked at closely,  
is a stream of change,  
not a frozen point that can be grasped.

When we say "this second,"  
that second has already passed.  
No moment can be held;  
everything flows,  
arising due to causes,  
disappearing due to causes.

Time is merely a shadow of change.  
And change arises from conditionality.

Thus, it is not that we move through time.  
Rather, time appears because of the movement of mind and  
phenomena supporting each other.  
Without change, there is no time.  
Without awareness of change,  
there is no experience of time.

---

## Even the Spiritual Path Is Not "I Who Practice"

Spiritual practice—  
hearing the Dhamma,  
meditation,  
contemplation,  
letting go,  
seeing things as they truly are,  
mindfulness—  
none of these involve a "self" performing them.

There is no "I" who practices.  
There is no "I" who becomes noble.  
There is no "I" who becomes pure through success.

Because there is suffering,  
there is the cessation of suffering. That is all.  
Or there is endless suffering,  
sustained by the strength of the self.

The path of liberation arises  
because suffering is understood  
and its causes are abandoned—  
not because "I" became pure or enlightened.

When we sit in meditation and stillness arises,  
it is not because we control it.  
It is because the conditions for stillness have ripened.

When profound understanding arises,  
it is because the seeds of wisdom,  
long conditioned,  
have finally borne fruit.

## **So, Who Is Liberated?**

No one.

There is no one who is freed.

Only a burden that is set down.

Only the stream of cause and effect,  
which, when seen clearly, becomes weightless.

This path is not to create a holier self,

but to uncover that the self was never there to begin with.

## INNER GRASP

As long as we believe that these experiences belong to us,  
the mind will continue to grasp:

- Grasping at pleasure:  
believing "I am the one enjoying it."
- Grasping at views:  
believing "I am the one who is right."
- Grasping at identity:  
believing "I am the one living this life."

But when conditioning is clearly seen:

- Pleasure and sorrow are merely automatic responses  
from contact and past tendencies.
- Views arise due to conditions:  
environment, teachings, and mental inclinations—  
not because there is an absolute truth.
- Identity is merely a label  
upon ever-changing patterns.

What is grasped was never truly held,  
and the one who grasps is never found.

---

## Release Does Not Need to Be Forced, Only Seen

Often people say,  
"I want to let go."

But who is letting go?

If there is one who grasps  
and another who lets go,  
there is still duality—  
there is still a 'self' in the middle.

See with the Eye of Truth:

- Grasping arises from ignorance.
- And when knowledge dawns,  
the grasping collapses naturally.

Just like a hand  
automatically drops a burning coal  
once it feels the heat—  
so too does the mind  
that understands conditioning  
automatically stop clinging to this compound.

No need for "an effort to let go."  
What is needed is simply clear seeing:

"This is not me, this is not mine,  
this is not my self."

### **Silence Without an Owner**

Then what remains  
when all is allowed to fall away?

Silence.

But not a hollow, sorrowful silence.  
Rather, a silence free from burdens—

from "having to be someone,"  
from "having to possess something,"  
from "having to go somewhere."

There, the mind is silent  
not because it restrains itself,  
but because it is no longer tied down.

Silent,  
not just outwardly quiet,  
but because there is no center claiming,  
no self feeling,  
"I am at peace."

Conditions still arise and pass away,  
but there is no longer anyone saying,  
"This is me."

That is true liberation.

---

Have you ever been silent...  
not because you didn't know what to say,  
but because everything already felt enough?

A silence  
not from sadness,  
not from emptiness,  
but because there is nothing left to question.

Not from finding answers,  
but because the very question  
dissolves—  
along with the ego that seeks to know,

to understand,  
to control.

This silence is not created.  
It appears when you stop creating.

And when you are there...  
there is no achievement.  
No celebration.  
Nothing to boast about.

Only a silence without a reason.  
And for the first time,  
you are truly here,  
without needing to be anyone.

## LIFE AFTER THE FALL OF "SELF"

Light, Wise, and Full of Compassion

When "self" is no longer made the center,  
all experiences cease to be as painful as before.  
Suffering may still arise,  
but there is no one being hurt.  
Happiness may still appear,  
but there is no one being happy.

So, how is life lived?

Life becomes peaceful,  
because there is nothing to prove.  
No more need to be seen as great.  
No pressure to "become something."  
For who must be great?  
Who must succeed?

The self is merely a shadow  
born of cause and effect.

Failure is not a disaster.  
Success is not a reason for pride.  
There is only phenomena  
arising and passing,  
flowing naturally.

---



## **Everything is Seen as Conditions**

Someone gets angry at you?

They are merely a stream of conditions,  
shaped by the past,  
by ignorance, and their own inner suffering.

We too have once been angry, disappointed, envious,  
all because of conditions.

Now we understand:

not because we are evil,  
nor because they are evil—  
but simply due to cause and effect.

The mind no longer reacts,  
but simply sees clearly  
and responds appropriately.

Seeing things as they are,  
without interference from the ego.

---

## **All Beings Suffer from the Same Illusion**

Every being struggles  
for safety, comfort, recognition,  
believing there is a 'self' within this compound.

But it is only a dream.

And when one awakens,  
there is no longer any sense of being hurt  
or of wanting to hurt others.

Because one knows  
how unreal the dream is,  
and how painful it is  
to live inside a dream mistaken for reality.

Forgiveness and understanding arise—  
the natural resonance of a mind that has seen:

"All of this is impermanent,  
merely a conditioned aggregation,  
and belongs to no one."

---

## **An Endless Ending**

Life Is a Stream That Needs No Mastery

We do not need to become saints.  
We do not need to become anything.

We simply live in the understanding that:

- Everything arises due to causes.
- There is no true ownership of anything.
- And therefore, there is no burden.

This is true freedom—  
not dependent on conditions,  
but born from understanding conditions.

This is called  
unconditional happiness.

# CONDITIONALITY

## **The Path with No One Walking**

Everything we think of as "self"  
is merely the stream of cause and effect.  
This body, this mind, this feeling, this memory, this consciousness—  
none of them belong to anyone.

All are merely phenomena,  
arising due to conditions,  
and disappearing when conditions cease.

This is what the wise have been seeking all along:  
the way out of suffering  
that depends on no one.  
Because truly,  
there is no one.

Seeing this does not mean becoming cold  
or withdrawing from life—  
quite the opposite.  
We become fully present.  
But present  
without carrying the burden of "self."

We perform good deeds,  
not to accumulate merit,

but because goodness naturally arises  
from understanding suffering.

We practice,  
not to become someone,  
but because suffering  
can only cease  
when its causes are no longer nurtured.

And ultimately, we realize:  
There is no one walking this path.  
Only cause and effect moving,  
and freedom happens  
when it is seen clearly.

Then, when the search ends,  
what you find is not an answer,  
but a silence  
that asks for nothing.

In other words, the disappearance of craving.

This, more or less,  
is the highest teaching of the Buddha's Dhamma  
as I understand it.

What is written here  
is not because I have experienced the complete dissolution of self,  
but merely a reflection—  
seeing how deeply reasonable it all is.

Thank you  
for reading until this silence.

# FOREWORD (That Arrived Late)

I am not a teacher, not a saint, nor someone who has seen the truth directly.

I am merely someone who often reflects in silence.

I did not write this book as a form of teaching.

I simply put into words what has long flowed within my mind, from reflections that continue to live quietly.

I am merely trying to express

how the Dhamma has begun to touch my life,  
and how I am slowly learning to live with it.

It was not easy to put these reflections into writing.

I often contemplate conditioning.

I see how everything that happens—  
the body, the mind, the feelings, the desires—  
all arise due to causes.

And the deeper this contemplation goes,

the clearer it becomes that even “I”

is just part of the stream of cause and effect.

This book is not meant to convince anyone.

It is merely an expression from a mind still learning,  
still sitting silently with questions,  
still opening to the possibility of seeing  
without rushing to conclusions.

May these words  
be a companion for reflection  
for anyone who feels restless with the concept of "self."  
Not to replace it with a new concept,  
but to invite the possibility of seeing directly  
how everything moves on its own.

Neither rejecting nor clinging,  
nor rushing to judge  
what has not been truly seen.

May this book create a little space  
within a mind seeking peace.

**Miki Yanto**